

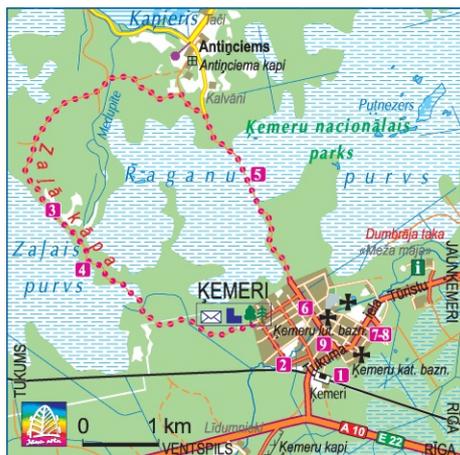


# HIKING ALONG THE GREEN DUNE

# Welcome to Ķemeri!



The Ķemeri National Park, apart from its nature reserve zone is open to hikers, plant, animal and landscape watchers, berry and mushroom hunters, swimmers, sunbathers, bicyclists and boaters. Mechanised motor vehicles are allowed only on general use roads. Please let's make sure to nurture the values which led us to visit the park in the first place!



The Ķemeri National Park was established in 1997, primarily for the purpose of protecting wetlands – the shallow western shore of the Bay of Rīga, overgrown seaside lakes, extensive swamps, damp forests, and lowland meadows as important locations for plants (fully one-quarter of the endangered plants which are listed in the Latvian Red Book are found in the park) and animals (particularly nesting and migrating birds). The park territory also includes one of the largest swamps in Latvia – the Great Ķemeri Heath, as well as other fairly large swamps such as Raganu Swamp, Zafais Swamp, Čaukciems Swamp and Sloka Swamp. Some of these were once used for peat extraction. The area around Ķemeri has long since been known as a source of sulphurous streams, and it remains an important location for obtaining sulphurous water and medicinal mud which at one time served as the foundation of the widely known Ķemeri Spa. Interesting historical objects in the park are completely linked to the seashore as a place where people could relax and recover their health. Today the territory of the national park includes educational nature trails (the Melnalkšņi Marsh trail, the Lake Sloka trail), bike routes, three bird-watching towers, etc. The administrative and informational centre for the park is found in the "Forest House" (Meža māja) in Ķemeri.

## THE ROUTE

The route is meant for active hikers or Nordic walkers. The route covers the western part of the town of Ķemeri, as well as the Green Dune, which is one of the most interesting aspects of the Ķemeri National Park. The Green Dune is an impressive barrier of dunes which stretches at a length of several kilometres, crossing a virginal swamp and passing through a forest of coniferous trees. The Raganu swamp can occasionally be espied on the eastern side of the Green Dune, while the Zafais swamp is on its western side. If it is rainy, bring waterproof footwear, because there are a couple of places along the routes where you'll be crossing very old wooden pathways across a swamp. It is also true that the Green Dune has been damaged very much by people who illegally drive mechanical vehicles there, and so please, let's all be careful with the natural treasures here – let's go on foot.

**Season:** April-October

**Beginning:** Ķemeri railway station, where there is a free car park

**End:** Ķemeri railway station

**Length:** ~ 14 km

**Duration:** ~ 3 - 4 h

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Road cover:** 2/3 of the way with gravel or earthen roads, 1/3 – paved roads

**Route:** Ķemeri railway station - Brocēnu Street - Partizānu Street - Green Dune - Antiņciems/Ķemeri road - Robežu Street - E. Dārziņa Street - Ķemeri Railway Station

**Distance from Rīga:** 45 km

**Markings:** None

**Logistics:** Circular route which returns to where it started

**Alternatives:** You can travel the route in the opposite direction. You can also extend it to Antiņciems (another 1-2 kilometres or half an hour). You can also merge this route with the hiking route "Ķemeri: The Historical Spa".

**Note!** You need appropriate shoes, insect repellent, and the map that is attached to this description. If you want to learn more about the surroundings, take a guide with you (he or she will also help you to find your way). The guide will tell about the park and what you are seeing along the route. You are responsible for your own safety and that of your children while you are on the route!

**Emergency services: 112**

## TOURISM SERVICES

### Nearby accommodations:

„Monikas”, +371 26161247

„Jūras mols”, +371 27099099

„Melnais stārķis”, +371 26751543

**Shops:** in Ķemeri

**Dining:** none in Ķemeri

**Guides:** Dagnis Mukāns, [dagnis.m@apollo.lv](mailto:dagnis.m@apollo.lv), +371 29216431; Ķemeri takas, [www.takas.lv](http://www.takas.lv), (+371)29224618

**Train time schedule:** [www.pv.lv](http://www.pv.lv)

### Information:

[www.celotajs.lv](http://www.celotajs.lv), +371 67617600

[www.visitukums.lv](http://www.visitukums.lv), +371 63124451

[www.jurmala.lv](http://www.jurmala.lv), +371 67147900

[www.enguresnovads.lv](http://www.enguresnovads.lv)

[www.daba.gov.lv](http://www.daba.gov.lv), +371 67730078



The Ķemeri railway station



A bridge across River Veršupīte



Cotton Deergass  
*Trichophorum alpinum*



The Green Dune



The Ķemeri school

The Ķemeri National Park has several bike, water and automobile routes. Look for a list of routes on [www.countryholidays.lv](http://www.countryholidays.lv) and for marking out in nature!

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**1**  **The Ķemeri railroad station** dates back to 1877, when the rail line was opened. A train from Moscow travelled to Ķemeri for awhile, and until 1920, there was a tram leading from the train station to the beach at Jaunķemeri. The station was destroyed during World War I and rebuilt in 1922 (the architect was Artūrs Medlingers). This was the first building in Ķemeri to be erected after the establishment of Latvia's independence. The station building was rebuilt once again after World War II. A bike rental facility is found inside.

**2** **Vēršupīte** is a small river which curves through the town of Ķemeri and has more than 10 small and romantic bridges across it – each with its own name.

**3** **The Green Dune** is beyond the Krāči hills (Krāckalni) and is the second most distinct dune formation in the national park. It runs for more than three kilometres, separating the Raganu and Zaļais swamps. An old earthen road is at the foot of the dune, and that's the basis for the route.

**4** **The Zaļais (Green) swamp** is a medium swamp in terms of the national park, and it used to be a place where peat moss was extracted (those areas are flooded now). In the North it links to the Čaukciems swamp. The swamp is to the South-west and West of the Green Dune.

**5** **The Raganu (Witch) swamp** is a comparatively large swamp to the East of the Green Dune, and like the Zaļais swamp, it is an important location for sulphurous water. The swamp is cut in half by the Ķemeri-Antiņciems road.

**6** **Robežu Street** appears to have been drawn with a ruler, and it runs along the historical boundary between the regions of Vidzeme and Kurzeme.

**7** **A former pharmacy** recalls the fact that Ķemeri at one time was a spa of all-Soviet importance. Symbols devoted to the subject of pharmacies are still on the wall.

**8** **The Great Oak** which grows in front of the Pienenīte preschool on Tukums Street is of local importance and is protected.

**9**  **The Ķemeri school** was built in 1934 (architect Kārlis Cināts). It is one of the few school buildings in Latvia to have preserved an historically valuable interior and exterior, including allegorical images on the façade.



**3** *The Green dune*



*First crossing point of the swamp*



**4** *View to the Green swamp from the Green dune*



**5** *The Raganu swamp*



**5** *The Raganu swamp*



*Second crossing point of the swamp*



*Ķemeri - Antiņciems road*



**7** *A former pharmacy*



*The Green dune*



*River Medupīte*



**8** *The Great Oak*



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Photo: Lauku ceļotājs (Juris Smajņinskis)

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